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Expoſtulatory Letter,

Addreſſed to

NICHOLAS LEWIS,

COUNT ZINZENDORFF,

AND

Lord Advocate of the UNITAS FRATRUM.

By GEORGE WHITEFIELD, A. B.
Late of PEMBROKE-COLLEGE, Oxford,
AND
Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Countess of Huntingdon.

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? Gal. iii. 1.

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A N

Expoſtulatory Letter, &c.

My Lord,

ALTHOUGH I am perſuaded that nothing hath a greater tendency to ſtrengthen the hands of infidels than the too frequent altercations between the profeſſors of chriſtianity; yet there are certain occaſions, wherein the neceſſary defence of the principles of our holy religion, as well as the practice of it, renders public remonſtrances of the greateſt uſe and importance. The ſacred pages afford us many examples of this nature. When *Aaron* was prevailed on by the *Iſraelites*, to make a golden calf, and offer ſacrifice to it, what a holy indignation did *Moſes* expreſs both againſt him and them?----When *Peter* and *Barnabas* were carried away with the diſſimulation of

the *Jews*, how openly did the apoſtle *Paul* withſtand them to the face, and reprove them before all, becauſe they were to be blam'd? And when this ſame apoſtle ſaw the churches of *Corinth* and *Galatia* in danger of being drawn away from the ſimplicity of the goſpel, what a fervent teſtimony did he bear againſt the authors and abettors of ſuch a deſtructive ſcheme?

I mention theſe inſtances, my lord, becauſe I hope they will ſerve as a ſufficient apology for my troubling your lordſhip with this letter.---For theſe many years laſt paſt have I been a ſilent, and, I truſt I can ſay, an impartial obſerver of the progreſs and effects of *Moravianiſm* both in *England*, and *America*; but ſuch ſhocking things have been lately brought to our ears, and offences ſwell'd to ſuch an enormous bulk, that a real regard for my King, my country, and, if I am not greatly miſtaken, a diſintereſted love for the ever bleſſed *Jeſus*, that King of kings, and the church which he hath purchaſed with his own blood, will not ſuffer me to be ſilent any longer.

Pardon me therefore, my lord, if at length, though with great regret, as the ſearcher of hearts knows, I at length am conſtrained to inform your lordſhip, that you, together with ſome of your *leading* brethren, have been unhappily inſtrumental in miſguiding many real, ſimple, honeſt-hearted chriſtians; of diſtreſſing, if not totally ruining numerous families, and introducing a whole *farrago* of ſuperſtitious, not to ſay idolatrous fopperies into the *Engliſh* nation.

For my own part, my lord, notwithſtanding a folio that hath been publiſhed (I preſume under your lordſhip's direction) about three years ago, I am as much at a loſs as ever to know what were the principles and uſages of the ancient *Moravian* church; but if ſhe was originally attir'd in the ſame garb, in which ſhe hath appeared of late amongſt many true-hearted though deluded proteſtants, ſhe is not that ſimple, apoſtolical church the *Engliſh* brethren were made to believe ſhe was about twelve years ago. Sure I am, that we can find no traces of many of her preſent practices in the yet more ancient, I mean the primitive churches, and

which

which we all know were really under an immediate, and truly apoſtolical inſpection.

Will your lordſhip be pleaſed to give me leave to deſcend to a few particulars? Pray, my lord, What inſtances have we of the firſt chriſtians walking round the graves of their deceaſed friends on *Eaſter-day*, attended with hautboys, trumpets, *French* horns, violins, and other kinds of muſical inſtruments? Or where have we the leaſt mention made of pictures of particular perſons being brought into the firſt chriſtian aſſemblies, and of candles being placed behind them, in order to give a tranſparent view of the figures?----Where was it ever known that the picture of the apoſtle *Paul*, repreſenting him handing a gentleman and lady up to the ſide of *Jeſus Chriſt*, was ever introduced into the primitive love-feaſts?----Or do we ever hear, my lord, of incenſe or ſomething like it being burnt for him, in order to perfume the room before he made his entrance among the brethren?---Or can it be ſuppoſed that he, who, together with *Barnabas* ſo eagerly repelled the *Lycaonians*, when they brought oxen and garlands in order

order to ſacrifice unto them, would ever have ſuffered ſuch things to be done for him, without expreſſing his abhorrence and deteſtation of them? And yet your lordſhip knows both theſe have been done for you, and ſuffered by you, without your having ſhewn, as far as I can hear, the leaſt diſlike of them at all *.

Again, my lord, I beg leave to enquire, Whether we hear any thing in ſcripture of eldreſſes or deaconeſſes of the apoſtolical churches ſeating themſelves before a table covered with artificial flowers, againſt that a little altar ſurrounded with wax ta-

* I might here take notice of the married women's being order'd to wear blue knots, the ſingle women pink, and thoſe that are juſt marriageable, pink and white; the widows that are paſt child-bearing, white, and thoſe that are not ſo, blue and white; and alſo of the epiſcopal knot of Mrs. *Hannah Nitſchman*, (who is, I am informed, the preſent general eldreſs of the congregation) which is ſometimes of a purple, and ſometimes of a roſe colour. Theſe, with many other fanciful things, might be conſidered; but my mind at preſent is too full of concern to dwell upon any thing but what more immediately ſtrikes at the welfare of ſociety, and what hath a ſtill more fatal tendency to draw away unwary ſouls from the ſimplicity of the goſpel.---Would to God I could with a ſafe conſcience be excuſed even from this!

pers,

pers, on which ſtood a croſs, compoſed either of mock or real diamonds, or other glittering ſtones? And yet your lordſhip muſt be ſenſible, this was done in *Fetter-Lane* chapel, for Mrs. *Hannah Nitſchman*, the preſent general eldreſs of your congregation, with this addition, that all the ſiſters were ſeated in *German* caps, and cloathed in white, and the organ alſo illuminated with three pyramids of wax tapers, each of which was tied with a red ribbon, and over the head of the general eldreſs was placed her own picture, and over that (*horreſco referens*) the picture of the ſon of God.---A goodly ſight this, my lord, for a company of *Engliſh* proteſtants to behold! Alas! to what a long ſeries of childiſh and ſuperſtitious devotions, and unſcriptural impoſitions muſt they have been habituated, before they could ſit as ſilent and tame ſpectators of ſuch an antichriſtian ſcene.---Surely, had *Gideon*, though but an old teſtament ſaint, been preſent, he would have riſen and pull'd down this, as he formerly did his father's altar.---Or had even that meek man *Moſes* been there, I cannot help thinking but he would have addreſſed your

your lordſhip, partly at leaſt, in the words with which he addreſſed his brother *Aaron*, "What did this people unto thee that thou "haſt introduced ſuch ſuperſtitious cuſtoms "among them? *"

But this is not all, I have another queſtion to propoſe to your lordſhip. Pray my

* A like ſcene to this was exhibited by the ſingle brethren in a room of their houſe at *Hatton-Garden*. One of them who helped to furniſh it gave me the following account.---The floor was covered with ſand and moſs, and in the middle of it was paved a ſtar of different coloured pebbles, upon that was placed a gilded dove, which ſpouted water out of its mouth into a veſſel prepared for its reception, which was curiouſly decked with artificial leaves and flags; the room was hung with moſs and ſhells; the count, his ſon, and ſon-in-law, in honour of whom all this was done, with Mrs. *Hannah Nitſchman* and Mr. *Peter Boehler* and ſome other labourers were preſent. Theſe were ſeated under an alcove, ſupported by columns made of paſte-board, and over their heads was painted an oval, in imitation of marble, containing the cyphers of count *Zinzendorff*'s family.---Upon a ſide-table was a little altar covered with ſhells, and on each ſide the altar was a bloody heart, out of, or near which proceeded flames. The room was illuminated with wax tapers, and muſicians placed in an adjacent apartment, while the company performed their devotions, and regaled themſelves with ſweetmeats, coffee, tea, and wine. After this the labourers departed, and the ſingle brethren were admitted in. I am told that moſt, if not all, of theſe leading perſons were preſent alſo at the celebration of Mrs. *Hannah Nitſchman*'s birth-day before-mentioned.

lord, did any of the apoſtles or *leaders* of the primitive churches ever uſurp an authority, not only over people's conſciences, but properties alſo, or draw in the members of their reſpective congregations to diſpoſe of whole patrimonies at once, or to be bound for thouſands more than they knew in their own conſciences they were worth? And yet your lordſhip knows this has been done again and again, in order to ſerve the purpoſes of the *brethren* for ſeveral years laſt paſt; and that too, at, or very near the time, when, in order to procure an act in their favour to go abroad, (which now appears to be rather a ſcheme to ſettle at home) they boaſted to an *Engliſh* parliament how immenſely rich they were.*

Your

* M. *Rimius*, aulic counſellor to the late king of *Pruſſia*, in a treatiſe lately publiſhed, I think makes it plainly appear, that the agents for the *Moravian* affairs, have miſinformed the parliament in ſeveral reſpects, and upon the whole, treated that auguſt body little better than the *Gibeonitiſh* ambaſſadors once treated *Joſhua*, the captain of the Lord's hoſt.---To this I refer the reader. It is wrote with great candour, and contains ſuch inconteſtible proofs of the many dangerous principles and practices of the *leading* brethren, that muſt, I think, conſtrain all that read it to ſay, "*My ſoul* "*come not thou into their ſecret, and to their aſſembly, mine* "*honour be not thou united.*"

Your lordſhip cannot but be ſenſible, that at this preſent time you ſtand indebted to ſundry perſons to the value of forty thouſand

I ſuppoſe it was a conſciouſneſs of this, that induced Mr. *Coſſart*, one of the Count's *chief* agents, to ſuggeſt to Mr. *Linde* ſometime before its publication, that it would be as good as three hundred pounds in his way, if Mr. *Rimius* his book could be ſuppreſſed. This looks bad; but I think it was ſtill worſe in another of the brethren roundly to affirm, in order to quiet ſome who were diſſatisfied by reading this book, that the author of the above-mentioned treatiſe, was one that perſonated Mr. *Rimius*, and that the whole was lies. Whereas they cannot but know, that this gentleman reſides in *Oxenden-ſtreet*, and addreſſed his book to his grace the lord archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, by permiſſion, and that he proves almoſt every word he ſays, from the brethren's own writings. the above-mentioned brother was pleaſed to add, that the real M. *Rimius* was a friend, and therefore would not write againſt them. I anſwer, that I verily believe he *therefore* wrote, as God knows I do, becauſe he is a friend; or to uſe his own words, "from a ſtrict regard to truth, juſtice, and the public good." ---And I think, if inſtead of adding ſin to ſin, by continuing ſtill to miſguide, enſlave, and put out the eyes of many of God's dear children, who I am perſuaded, know no more of their ſecret myſteries and intended purpoſes, than thoſe who never heard of them at all, it would ſhew a much better ſpirit in the *leading* brethren, either publicly to refute, or ingenuouſly confeſs, and amend the things laid to their charge.---- This is what God and the world may juſtly require at their hands, and without this, I cannot ſee how they can expect any future bleſſing from above; ſince the

ſand pounds ſterling; and unleſs ſome of your brethren had agreed to ſtay ſix years for about twenty thouſand pounds, due to them (tho 'after the expiration of that term, as they have no ſecurity, in all probability they will be juſt where they are now) and if the other creditors alſo, upon conſideration of ſome bonds given, and mortgages made for principal and intereſt, * had not agreed to ſtay four years, for twenty one thouſand pounds more, many of the poor *Engliſh* brethren, who, out of I know not what kind of infatuation, have not only given their all, but have been bound for thouſands more than they are able to pay, muſt either have immediately become bankrupts,

wiſeſt of men hath told us, that *He that covereth his ſins ſhall not proſper, but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them ſhall have mercy.* Grant us all this mercy, heavenly Father, for thy dear ſon's ſake!

As I am not perſonally acquainted with Mr. *Rimius*, I take this opportunity of informing him, that it is the deſire of many, that the *Latin* Appendices may be tranſlated into *Engliſh*, and the whole printed in a ſmall edition, in order to make it more extenſively uſeful.

* The buildings in *Yorkſhire*, *Bedfordſhire*, &c. Beſides this, there are ſome thouſands due to others, upon bond, and many thouſands to a particular gentleman, for which the Count has mortgaged one of the *German* ſettlements: I think it is *Marienburg*.

and thereby the creditors perhaps, not have had a ſhilling in the pound, or have been obliged to ſhut up their ſhops, go to priſon, or be turned out into the wide world, to the utter ruin of themſelves and families.

The diſtreſs and anguiſh of mind that hundreds have been involv'd in upon this very account, is, I believe, unſpeakable.* And the bare reflection upon it, whilſt I

* Since my writing this I have been told of a very ſingular expedient made uſe of by Mr. *Peter Boehler*, one of the brethren's biſhops, in order to ſtrengthen the faith, and to raiſe the drooping ſpirits of Mr. *William Bell*, who hath been unhappily drawn in, with ſeveral others, to be one of their agents. It was this,--- It being Mr. *Bell*'s birth-day he was ſent for from his houſe in *Nevil's-alley*, *Fetter-lane*; but for a while, having had ſome words with Mr. *Boehler*, he refuſed to come: at length he complied, and was introduced into a hall, in the ſame alley, where was placed an artificial mountain, which, upon ſinging a particular verſe, was made to fall down, and then behind it was diſcovered an illumination, repreſenting *Jeſus Chriſt* and Mr. *Bell*, ſitting very near, or embracing each other; and out of the clouds was alſo repreſented plenty of money falling round Mr. *Bell* and the Saviour. This ſtory appeared to me ſo incredible at the firſt hearing, that, though I could not doubt the veracity of the relator, yet fearing he might be miſinformed, I ſent for him again, and he aſſured me that Mr. *Bell* told this ſtory himſelf ſometime ago in company, and a perſon of good reputation of that company related it to an acquaintance of mine. May God grant him and all others who have

I am writing makes my heart almoſt bleed within me.---Who, who but themſelves, my lord, can tell the late perplexity of their minds, who have been already arreſted, or obliged to break off their reſpective partnerſhips? Or what words can expreſs the great concern Mr. *Freeman* and Mr. *Thomas Grace* muſt have been neceſſarily under, when they found that bills had been drawn in their name unknown to them, to the value of forty-eight thouſand pounds?* And how pitiable, my lord, muſt the preſent circumſtances of young Mr. *Rhodes* be, who, to ſtop a little of the above-mentioned gap, was prevailed on, your lordſhip knows by whom, about eighteen months ago, to ſell his eſtate of above four hundred pounds a year, and went or was ſent off very lately, as

have been undeſignedly concerned, a more ſure and ſtable prop for their faith, even his own word, in which he cauſes his people to truſt. Then, and not till then, even upon the greateſt emergency, they may without any fanciful repreſentations boldly ſay, "*Who art thou, O great* "*mountain: before the Lord* Jeſus, *our all conquering* Ze-"rubbabel, *thou ſhalt become a plain.*"

* This Mr. *Grace* told me himſelf in publick company; he and Mr. *Freeman* live in *Throgmorton-ſtreet.*

as I am assured to *France* (leaving a destitute mother behind him) only with twenty-five pounds, for the payment of which he left his watch, beureau, horse and saddle? †

These are but a few instances, my lord, amongst many, indeed too too many, that might be given. The brethren's agents, and those concerned with them can best tell what horrid equivocations, untruths and low artifices have been made use of to procure

† The case of this Mr. *Rhodes* is very singular.---- He was of mean birth and occupation, but upon the unexpected falling of many lives, became suddenly possessed of an estate of above four hundred pounds a year; and to serve the brethren, after many importunities, he was induced to dispose of it. Mr. *Lee* the banker purchased it, and Messrs. *Freeman* and *Grace* received six thousand pounds of the money towards what was due to them. Besides this, Mr. *Rhodes* was bound for many thousands more. This made him very uneasy, and fearing the consequence, he one afternoon, about ten weeks ago, stole an interview with two single brethren, and beseeched them for Christ's sake, to let him have twenty five pounds, for the payment of which he left them his watch, beureau, horse and saddle. He then took his leave, saying, in all probability, he should never see them any more, and having nothing to spare to leave behind for his poor mother (who I hear is since dead) was content to send her a few parting lines: since he has been gone, the horse, watch, beureau

cure money, at high intereſt, wherever it was to be had, in order to keep up the brethren's credit, in that poor lame manner, it hath been kept up for a conſiderable time. Was the whole ſcene to be opened, I believe every one would be of opinion, that ſuch an eccleſiaſtical project, never was heard of before in any part of his majeſty's dominions.

This, my lord, the *Royal-Exchange* hath long ſince rung of; and if the ſame part hath been acted abroad * how many families must have been ruined there, how many more be yet ruined, in order to fill up the preſent *Engliſh* chaſm; and conſequently what loads of guilt, muſt needs lie at the door of ſomebody?---Surely, the

beureau and ſaddle were ſold for twenty ſeven pounds three ſhillings; ſo that the young man has the balance in bank. God grant, that this may prove the laſt perſon that may be impoſed on in this way!

* It appears too plain from Mr. *Rimius* that this hath been the caſe. And no wonder, ſince he quotes this aſſertion of the counts from his own writings, "The "*æconomiſts* of the ſociety may ſay to a young "rich man: Either give us all thou haſt, or get thee "gone."

Lord

Lord of all Lords, whoſe eyes are like a flame of fire, and who requires truth in the inward parts, will one day or other viſit for theſe things, by bringing to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and thereby making manifeſt the counſels of the hearts.

I need not inform your lordſhip, that *Babels* are generally ſuffered to be built pretty high, before God comes down to confound the language of the builders. If knaves are employed (as commonly they are), God's honour is concerned to diſcover them. And if any of his own children are undeſignedly drawn in, (which is frequently the caſe) he, who hath promiſed not to ſuffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear, will in mercy ſome way or ther, rebuke the tempter, and make a way for them to eſcape. It's true, this, in publick concerns, may ſometimes expoſe them to a little worldly contempt, and, for a while they may ſeemingly be cruſhed under the rubbiſh of the fallen fabrick, but even this ſhall work together for their good; and happy will it be for them, if after all, they

at length learn this important leſſon, *viz.* That it is dangerous, upon any pretence whatſoever, to go from the written word, or give up their conſciences to the guidance of any man, or body of men under heaven. This your lordſhip well knows is what weak and unſtable ſouls are too apt to do, and artful and deſigning men, who are fond of power, eſpecially if naturally they are of an ambitious turn of mind, eaſily catch at the pleaſing bait. But honeſty, my lord, will be found to be the beſt policy after all; and therefore, God forbid, that any who call themſelves the followers of the Lamb, ſhould glory in any thing ſave the croſs of Chriſt.

At preſent, I ſhall add no more, but earneſtly ſaying *Amen* to that part of the brethren's litany, however exceptionable in other reſpects, "From untimely projects, "and from unhappily becoming great, keep "us our good Lord and God:" and as heartily praying, that the glorious *Jeſus* may proſper all that is right, and give grace to

to correct and amend all that is wrong, among all his people of all denominations,

I ſubſcribe myſelf, My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient

humble Servant,

London, April 24, 1753.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD.